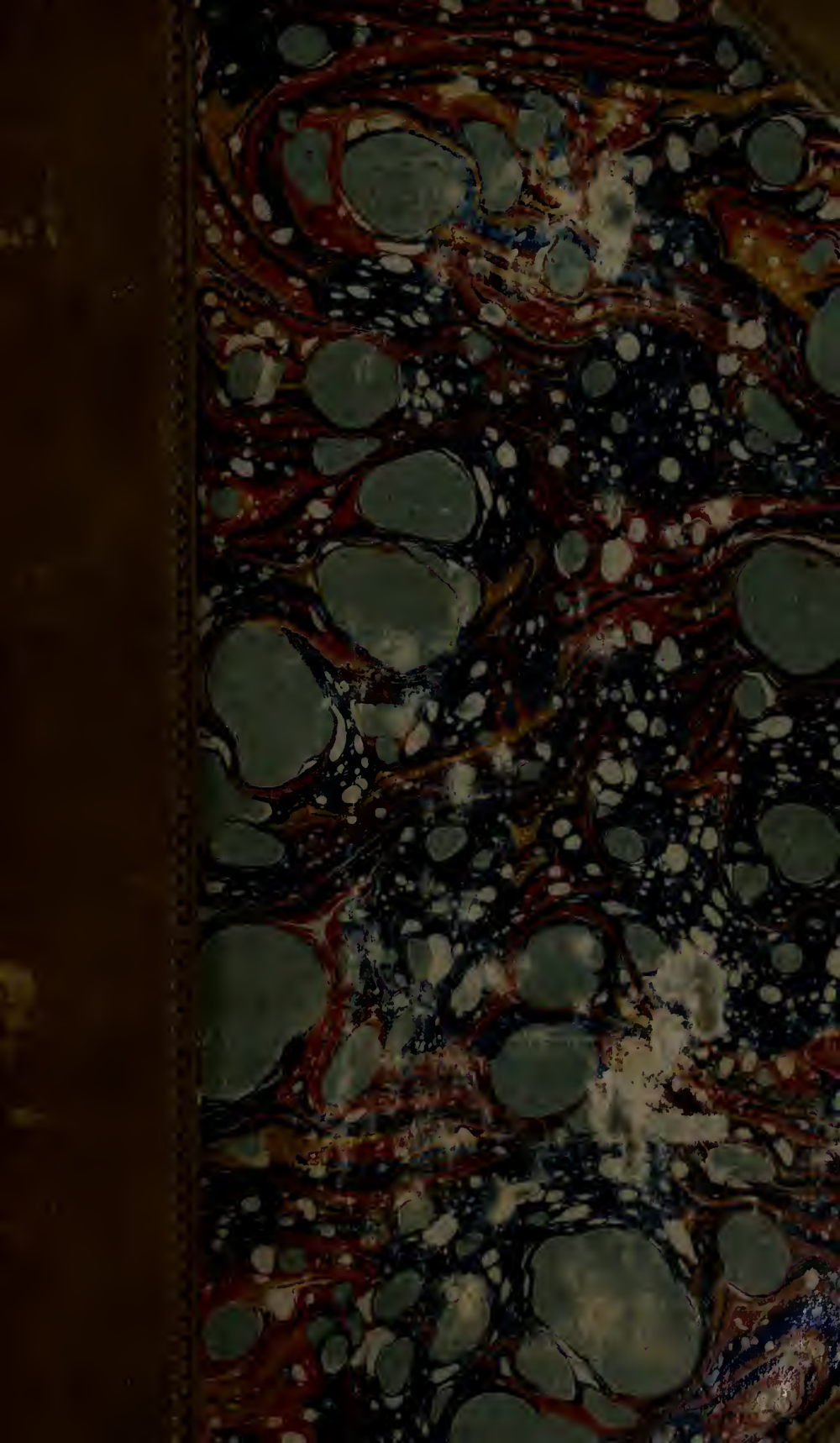
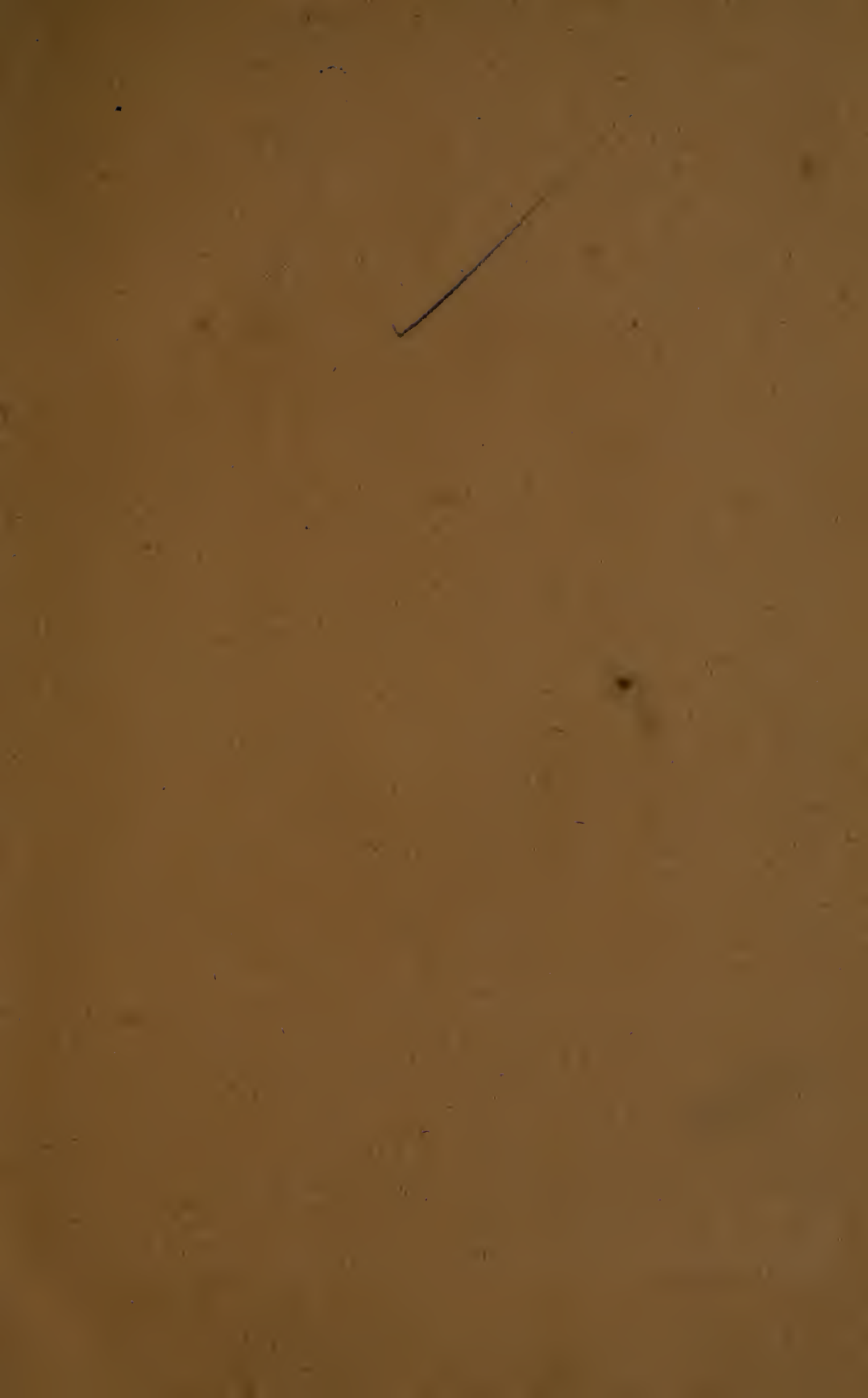






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normal condition of the civilised world ; and that in the crusade which Cobden preached, not to rescue holy sepulchres from sceptical custody, but the hearts of men from the dominion of selfishness, envy, hatred, and cruelty, there is real hope for the human race.

THE CONNECTION
OF
CHURCH AND STATE,

WITH A PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE
QUESTION OF

THE IRISH CHURCH:

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT CHELTENHAM, JUNE 9TH, 1868, AT THE ANNUAL
MEETING OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND CLERICAL
AND LAY ASSOCIATION,

BY

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TO
THE PRESIDENT AND COMMITTEE
of the
CHURCH OF ENGLAND
CLERICAL AND LAY ASSOCIATION,
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT,
THIS ADDRESS,
READ BEFORE THEM JUNE 9th, 1868,
IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED.

CHURCH AND STATE.

In considering the question before us, it seems desirable, in the first place, to establish some general principles on the connection of Church and State; which it will afterwards be easy to apply to our own case, as well as to that of the sister establishment in Ireland.

There are points in which the Church and the State resemble each other, and aim at the same results. The State, not less than the Church, is of divine appointment, and rests ultimately upon the instincts implanted in our nature, and the providential government of the world. Like the family, it is a product of nature, not of imaginary social compact between governors and governed. It is not left to our option whether our early life shall be passed under parental guidance and the social influences of the family; the question is by divine providence decided for us. Neither is it left to our option whether we shall be members of a State or not; here, too, nature and providence anticipate us. When the human race passed beyond the limits of the family, it was impelled by an irresistible instinct to organize itself into sovereign political communities, supreme over their own members, but independent of each other; the ultimate and the noblest of the forms of social union of which mankind is capable. The process was hastened, but not originated, by the

confusion of languages ; and so, in a real sense, the "powers that be are ordained of God."—*Rom. viii., 1.*

Again, the State, as well as the Church, has for its object the establishment of God's kingdom upon earth. It is an unworthy view of the State to regard it as a mere institution for the protection of life and property, though that, no doubt, is its main object ; as unworthy as that which would regard the twin natural institution of the family as having for its aim the mere physical nurture of children. Heathen writers, such as Plato, knew better. The State is the greatest of all schools of *natural* education ; and in a certain sense, and within certain limits defined by its idea, aims not merely at securing personal rights, but at the intellectual and moral improvement of its members. Artificial associations, such as a bank, a joint-stock company, or a literary society—associations that take their origin from the will of man—do not necessarily aim at moral results : the case is different with those *natural* types of social organization which derive their existence directly from the will of the Creator, and rest upon fundamental instincts of the race.

Once more, the State and the Church operate upon the same material, viz., fallen human nature. And this, too, is the case with the family. The national life, in all its complex relations and aspects, supplies both Church and State with matter for their respective influences. For as it is a narrow conception of the State to limit its scope to merely material advantages, so it is a narrow conception of the Church to confine its work to the great realities of the life to come. It is to be the salt, and the light of this world, as well as a beacon to the shore of eternity (*Matt. v. 13, 14*). It is intended to be the instrument of Christianizing the natural society,

whether Family or State; and by means of those peculiar and subtle influences which it alone can wield, to leaven, without visibly interfering with, every lower sphere of human life. May the suggestion be hazarded, in passing, that this, the social aspect of Christianity, in its relation to questions of secular yet important bearing, particularly the casuistry of common life, has not sufficiently occupied the attention of the modern Evangelical clergy?

In these respects the Church and the State rest ultimately upon the same basis: and it is worthy of notice that the terms by which the former is described are frequently drawn from the two natural, but inferior, institutions which may be compared with it. Sometimes it is called God's family ("I will be a Father to you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters;") and sometimes the heavenly Jerusalem, "the city of the living God" (*Heb. xii. 22*); an intimation, not obscurely given, that these earthly distinctions, Family, State, and Church, will one day be merged in the higher unity of the perfected kingdom of God.

Wherein, then, do State and Church differ? They differ essentially:—in the place they respectively occupy in the moral training of mankind; in the instruments they respectively employ for the attainment of their purposes; in the power of coercion at their command; and in the measure and standard of morality which they require. In the first place, the State is but preparatory to the Church, and occupies much the same position in reference to the latter which the law of Moses did in reference to Christ; the one was, and the other is, a school of discipline for Christianity; not, of course, to the same extent, or precisely after the same fashion: there is nothing in the State, as such, *directly* leading to Christ,—no moral law incorporated in the civil code to produce conviction of

sin,—nothing typical, or shadowy of good things to come. Nevertheless, the analogy is real. As the Jewish theocracy was so framed as forcibly to repress the outbreaks of sin, particularly of the sin of idolatry, and thus to form an external barrier behind the shelter of which the blossoms of spiritual religion might flourish and expand, so the Christian state stands between Christianity and the fierce ebullitions of the unrenewed heart; which, were they permitted unchecked to devastate society, would leave no place at all for the peculiar operation of the Church. It is still true that before the Gospel comes the Law. A negative basis, at any rate, must be secured. Life and property must be rendered safe; self-willed violence repressed. The State bears not the sword in vain. Our burglars, garotters, and murderers would make short work of the tender fruits of religion if they were not kept in check by the rough weapons of the civil magistrate. And thus the State forms a preparatory, but not the less a necessary, foundation, on which the Church is to prosecute her mission; only, however, a foundation, not to be confounded with the edifice it is to bear.

They differ in the *instruments* respectively employed; which, in the case of the State, are natural, in the case of the Church supernatural. Legislation civilization, social regulations, education, art, and literature; such means as these the State has at its command, and uses to the promotion of its ends. The Church is the seat of Redemption, with all that appertains to that term. She wields not the temporal, but the sword of the Spirit; the means of grace are hers; in her resides the mysterious agency of the Holy Spirit—powers of which the State, as such, is not the depositary.

They differ, especially, in the *means of coercion* at their command. The State secures its ends by tem-

poral pains and penalties ; the Church has only one weapon—excommunication, which, if it is to retain its proper nature, must never be associated with temporal damage. Internal discipline, and in the last resort expulsion from the society—the church cannot advance beyond this ; and if profanity bursts these tender meshes, she must beware of attempting to strengthen them by the coarse adjunct of the secular arm.

They differ, lastly, in their *measure and standard of morality*. The State promotes morality, but in its negative, stationary (*status*) aspect : it does not require, nor anticipate, free action ; what it enjoins, or prohibits, it does so as matter of law ; and since its power of compulsion does not extend beyond the outward act, it leaves untouched the whole domain of unwritten spiritual morality, the motives and affections, the hidden springs of action which really determine character. If it seems occasionally to step out of its way to reward noble sentiments or splendid services, this is not its normal function, which consists in maintaining right between man and man, repressing outward crime, legislating, as far as is necessary, to the maintenance of order, vindicating the broken law. With such a moral standard, or such obedience as this, the Church is not satisfied. Her legislation reaches the inner man, and elevates motives and principles above acts. A forced virtue is of no value in her eyes : she aims at making men a law to themselves, spontaneously virtuous. Hence the distinction between crime and sin. The State deals with crime, the Church with sin. Innumerable moral delinquencies with which the State cannot interfere, are condemned before the tribunal of the Church,—such as baseness, ingratitude, selfishness, covetousness, and the like. The State sends a man to prison for an act of petty larceny, committed,

perhaps, under severe temptation ; and it discharges its duty in doing so. In the eye of the Church such an act may be incomparably less criminal than private treachery or private uncharitableness, to which the State attaches no penalty. Neither is to be blamed for acting according to its own principles ; but the principle of the one is altogether distinct from that of the other. The morality of the Church is boundless ; the limit constantly recedes from view. "Owe no man anything," is the precept of the State ; "but to love one another," adds the Church. Christian love, the flower of Christian morality, is a debt that never can be fully discharged ; ascend as high as we may, we shall discern peaks yet unscaled.

Such are the distinctions between the two bodies ; and when we come to speak of their alliance, it is obvious at once that the one never can be formally fused into the other. Let us suppose the case of a material identity between them,—that is, that all the members of the body politic are also members of the body ecclesiastical : this would not contribute in the least to render Church and State formally one. The same man may hold office in the State and office in the Church ; but in the one capacity he would have to act on one set of principles, in the other upon another set of principles. As a civil magistrate he might condemn a man to death whom, as a minister, or member of the Church, he might, on signs of repentance, console with promises of the Divine forgiveness, and the hope of heaven. A confusion between Church and State, the transference to the one of what belongs only to the other, as, *e.g.*, the employment by the Church of civil penalties to propagate her tenets, can only end in the utter depravation of the true idea of each. They can accomplish their respective ends only when they are kept formally distinct. On the other hand, their common

origin from heaven, and their common objects render it improper that the one should occupy an antagonistic position towards the other. The State needs the sanctions of religion, as appears emphatically in the judicial administration of oaths; and the Church, as a local society, needs the aid of the State for her due development and control, and may receive such aid so far as it can consistently be rendered on the one hand and received on the other. An absolute severance of Church and State, as it would be an impossibility, so it would be an evil if it could take place. But it is an impossibility. The moment the Church gains "a local habitation and a name," whether it be established or not, like all other inferior (temporally inferior) associations, it attracts the notice, and falls under the jurisdiction, of the sovereign authority. Not to speak of its voluntary endowments, which in every well-ordered community are either protected, or prohibited, by the civil power, numberless questions such as those relating to mixed marriages, or the education of children, or legitimacy depending on the validity of the marriage ceremony—questions occupying the border-ground between what is purely ecclesiastical and purely civil—can never, consistently with the liberties of the subject, be exempted from secular control and determination. Points of contact then between the two bodies being inevitable, the question is, Shall these remain in an unsettled state, or shall an acknowledged alliance take place? The United States of America have preferred the former, most of the European nations, our own included, the latter alternative. Assuming that an alliance is expedient, the problem before us is to adjust the conditions of it. There can be, of course, no question of *alliance* where, as in the Papal theocracy, the Church has absorbed all the powers of the State into herself.

But before we proceed further it may be proper to gain clearer notions of one of the terms in question, and this with a particular reference to the latter portion of our subject. What is meant by the State is pretty well understood ; but when we speak of the Church as distinguished from it, and yet in alliance with it, what do we mean by the Church? If the reply is, the national Church, what is a national Church? Does the State find it, or make it? That is, several forms of Christianity being supposed to exist in the State, does the latter choose one, and does the favoured candidate forthwith become the national Church? And if so, on what principle does the State make its choice? On the ground of truth (*i.e.*, theological, saving truth)? or as adopting that form of religion which it thinks most useful to itself? or because a certain form happens to be that professed by the majority? These are questions which are frequently asked, and to all of them we have one answer to give, *viz.*, that where the alliance has taken place under favourable auspices, and is a healthy natural growth, the State has made no choice at all. The fact is that the notion of a deliberate compact between the State and some local Christian society within its limits, by virtue of which the society assumes the character of a national Church—the terms of the compact being establishment and protection in return for service and religious sanction—appears as much a fiction as the celebrated social compact between governors and governed. No Church can be made national which is not so already. No external power can make it so. Suppose the State were to transfer its recognition to the Baptist community of this country, would that transform the latter into the national Church? We mean no offence if we say, Assuredly not.

A really national Church is not less a natural

product than the political constitution of the nation, where such constitution exists. The British constitution, we are told, is not a matter of parchment; it is the result of the training of centuries; it has grown with the nation's growth, and is incorporated with the nation's life. In like manner a national Church cannot be extemporized, or crudely transferred from one locality to another; it too, if it is what it professes to be, has struck its roots deep in the national life, and is connected with the body politic by vital ligatures. A national Church is a local Christian society, which not only has extended its boundaries so as to comprise within its pale the nation materially considered, or the majority of it, but which represents in its constitution and features the national character, and in which the various orders of society and the legitimate aspects of the religious life find their appropriate spiritual nutriment. It is the reflection of the national religious life, the form into which the nation spontaneously throws its Christianity, the efflorescence of the national faith. It follows at once that no true national Church can be the creature of conquest; it can never be forced upon a nation. Even in cases in which something of compulsion may be thought discernible, as in the history of the formation of our own reformed national Church, it will be found that a work had been for ages secretly going on, by which the mind of the nation was prepared for the change. And the same may be said of the foreign national churches which have renounced their allegiance to Rome. Protestantism, as a system of doctrine, existed in Germany, and as an assertion of national independence, in England, long before a visible rupture with the Papacy took place in either country. The labours of Wickliff, the translation of the Scriptures into the native tongue, the growing

intolerance of foreign ecclesiastical interference, had brought the English people to the verge of reforming their Church before the time arrived which was to initiate the decisive movement. It is true, as is always the case in great revolutions, that the hour and the man were necessary to help the struggling nation to its new birth : nations often remain inarticulate for want of a mouthpiece, as Luther abroad, and Henry VIII at home. The fermenting national sentiment demanded an occasion, and an organ ; but no mistake can be greater than to suppose that the establishment of our Church was *forced* upon the laity, whatever may be said of some of the clergy, of the nation. The joy with which Elizabeth's accession was hailed by all ranks and orders is refutation sufficient of such a notion.

The recognition of a national Christianity, whether it be connected with the State or not, as distinguished from saving Christianity, is of great moment. The sphere of saving Christianity is the Church in its invisible aspect ; it has to do with the immutable facts of the Christian life, such as repentance, faith, holiness : these remain the same under all climes and in all ages, and are independent of local circumstances. But a national Christianity is the form which the faith of a nation assumes when religion enters into combination with its political, intellectual, and social life. And since nations differ from each other in these points, there may exist, as in fact we see, different national churches,—all, it is true, agreeing in certain fundamental points (“one Lord, one faith, one baptism,” &c.), but otherwise widely differing from each other in polity, ritual, and even in inner spirit. And so in a true and legitimate sense we may speak of an Anglican, a Scotch, and a Lutheran, Christianity ; meaning thereby the form into which the nation throws its expression of Christian faith : which form is more or

less modified by the national idiosyncrasy, Take *e.g.* the two portions into which this island is divided : it would be improper and uncharitable for either portion to affirm that its own Christianity is purer and more influential than that of its neighbour ; but it would probably be impossible for either to assimilate perfectly that of its neighbour. The English temperament, it may be affirmed, could never develop its national Christianity into the Scottish model, nor the Scotch its national Christianity into the English model ; yet, either is a valuable exponent of Christian faith. We may go further, and maintain that it would be dangerous for any nation to attempt to change, abruptly and violently, its own model for another, even if the former might be considered inferior, in some respects, to the latter. Some, *e.g.*, may think the Scottish view of the Lord's Day erroneous, or at least defective ; and we may confidently affirm that it would not be suited to England ; yet no reflective person, we should think, would wish to see the nation's faith on that point rudely shaken or contemptuously assailed. Remove a stone from the building prematurely, and what may ensue none can tell. From what has been said, we may draw the inference, in passing, how futile all attempts probably will be to transfer our church bodily, as it exists in England, into the colonies ; such as the well-known project of excellent but enthusiastic persons in the matter of the Canterbury settlement. Hence too the virtual failure of missions which do not eventually issue in a national Christianity. To save souls is, no doubt, the primary object of missions ; but we cannot rest content until we see the national life, in its peculiarities and rich variety, reflected in its Christianity. We send European missionaries to India, but we look forward to the time when there will be an Indian as well as a British Christianity,

native and self-sustained. English Christianity in India, if it never advances beyond that stage, must remain a sickly exotic. Nor shall we be in the least disturbed if the indigenous Christianity of India shall assume a form somewhat different from our own; we do not wish the future Indian Church to be the exact counterpart of ours. It *cannot* be so; any more than ours is an exact counterpart of that of the countries from which the missionaries came who evangelized these islands.

If this be the true conception of a national Church, it is obvious that none such could exist in the first ages of the Gospel. Churches, *i.e.*, local Christian societies, were planted in Jewish and heathen countries, but the New Testament presents us with no example of a national Church. The epistles speak of the Church, or the saints at, or in, Ephesus, Colosse, Rome; but not of the Church of Asia Minor, or of Italy, or of the Roman empire. Christianity was exerting its saving influence upon individuals from the first, and from the first chrystalized itself into an appropriate ecclesiastical organization; but to become national it had to bide its time. It had to wait until from being a sect it had overthrown every antagonistic form of religion, and pervaded all classes of society; until it had incorporated itself with family, social, and political life. At last the State, under Constantine, recognized and adopted it, not because the State chose it out of several modes of worship, not by virtue of any formal compact, but simply because it had become *de facto* the national faith, and it was but a step further to make it so *de jure*. The union existed substantially before the two were formally wedded. Does Scripture then furnish us with *no* hints respecting national Churches? It does so, but in the Old Testament. The New Testament is the manual of

personal and ecclesiastical Christianity; the Old Testament presents us with the conception of a religious State. Not of course that we can reproduce the Jewish theocracy under Christianity: the perfect fusion of Church and State which that institution exhibited is only possible when the object of worship is also the temporal sovereign, and charges himself with the administration of the civil laws. It was the notion of a Christian theocracy which misled the Puritans of the 17th century, and lay at the root of much that is painful in the history of our own Church. The distinction ever to be borne in mind is that between crime and sin: crime falls under the secular jurisdiction, to heaven it belongs to visit sin. Yet, notwithstanding the essential distinction in this point between Christianity and the Mosaic institute, the Old Testament seems intended to furnish the conception of a national Church, as distinguished from what is merely local or sectarian; and in this, as in some other points, this part of the inspired volume has by no means become to us Christians a dead letter.

The fact of a national Christianity, as just explained, is not invalidated by the existence of sects side by side with it. A *unanimous* expression of the national faith is not to be looked for, except where the rights of conscience have been trampled upon, and freedom of thought suppressed by the power of the civil magistrate. Leave them unfettered, and controversy, with its offspring dissent, immediately appears: to some minds an appalling apparition, to others, as we venture to think, of larger compass, the very condition of the ultimate prevalence of truth. Out of the seething caldron of perfect liberty of opinion in religious matters the fair form of Apostolic Christianity gradually emerges into shape and consistence. It takes time

to do so; but faith looks forward to the result as certain. Meanwhile sects, although inevitable, are easily distinguishable from the national Christianity. They commonly owe their origin to *one* truth of the Gospel, or *one* side of religion; forced into undue prominence; or to reaction from a corrupt state of things in the Church; or to unwise measures of repression; or sometimes to political discontent allying itself with religion. And they bear the marks of their inferior origin throughout. The little streamlet is narrow and shallow, and makes more noise than perhaps its merits entitle it to: the mighty river which fertilizes a continent moves on with silent but powerful current. Apart from figure, on whatever ground sects may base their existence, and of whatever provisional use they may be (and we are not concerned to deny that such pleas they may, in many cases, fairly urge), it cannot be said that like a truly national Church, they reflect the rich and manifold elements of the national character, and form a platform on which all aspects of the religious life (so far as they may be legitimately indulged,) dogmatic, æsthetic, hortative, emotional, intellectual, may meet in harmony, supplement each other, and issue in a unity the richer because of the varieties which it comprises. Sectarian unity is forced rather than natural; an undue separation takes place between religion and common life; charity abates; creeds and formularies become too stringent; religion runs too much in one channel; and altogether the dissident body, however meritorious in other respects it may be, and even though it may comprise, numerically, a considerable part of the nation, shews itself unfitted for alliance with the State. It has not been, like the national Church, the spontaneous product of a Christianized nation. We hold it to be a misfortune when circumstances,

as in Germany and the United States, incapacitate the nation for the manifestation of a national Church, truly its own. The next best thing is that the sections into which it is divided should, as far as possible, assume the magnitude and exhibit the properties of such a Church, and thus rise above a mere sectarian existence.

It may seem invidious, yet it is but the truth, to say, that of all religious bodies in this part of the island the existing Church of England exhibits the greatest number of the features by which a national Church is distinguished. Where sectarian animosity is not at work, rich and poor, educated and uneducated, seem equally to find spiritual nutriment within its pale. To Christians of diverse temperament it offers reasonable scope for the gratification of their spiritual sympathies. It is the most tolerant of our religious sections. The very defects with which it has been charged, viz., that its formularies speak with an uncertain sound, that they can be claimed by different parties, High Church and Low Church, Calvinists and Arminians, as sanctioning their respective tenets, prove its fitness for the position it occupies. We must pronounce it in this respect superior to its sister establishment in the northern part of the kingdom. A national Church, if it is to hold its ground, *must* be as comprehensive as consistency with its leading principle will allow. We do not deny that such a leading principle it must and will have stamped upon it, by the religious convictions of the nation. We could not, *e.g.*, substitute the Apostles' and Nicene Creed for the Thirty-nine Articles, as if Protestantism were not an inseparable element from the history and genius of our Church. It is so, and for our Church to ignore that fact were simply suicide. But with this concession, the greater the scope a national Church

furnishes to varieties of opinion the more it answers to its character. Hitherto, our Church has, to a great extent, fulfilled these conditions : what may be in store for her we do not know. Speaking generally we may say, that if the State were deliberately to choose a form of Christianity to ally itself with (which in a free country we hold to be a fiction), it would act wisely in selecting that body not merely which is numerically the greater but the origin of which is most lost in obscurity, and which, from its many-sidedness and tolerance, seems best to reflect, and most likely to assimilate *every* element of the national character. So that the question of nationality is not quite identical with that of numbers. It is indeed almost impossible to conceive a national Church constituting the *minority* of the nation ; still something more than mere numbers seems to appertain to its idea.

From the point of view we have taken the questions cannot be entertained whether the State, as such is bound to propagate religious (*i.e.*, saving) truth, or to act towards its subjects as a parent towards his child in the matter of religious instruction, and the like. With respect to the latter notion, whatever the duty of a State may be where all the intelligence is on the side of the governors, and all the barbarity and ignorance on the side of the governed, we are not accustomed, in the present maturity of our kingly commonwealth, to regard the relations of government and people as parallel to that of parent and child. But the truth is, the State, *as such*, has not for its duty to propagate any particular form of Christianity; *i.e.*, in other words, to undertake the cure of souls : it needs religion, but not necessarily *a* religion. In fact, as Warburton¹ remarks,—what

¹ "Alliance of Church and State." In *Omichund v. Baker* (Smith's Leading cases) it was established that the depositions of a Pagan idolater, sworn according to the customs of the country in which he lives, may be read in evidence. It was held sufficient if the witness

the State absolutely needs, as a State, is a recognition of the fundamental principles of *natural* religion, viz., the existence and providence of God, and a future state of reward and punishment: if it finds Christianity, and a Christian Church, accepted by the nation, so much the better; it is, as Coleridge¹ terms it, a "happy accident," on which the State has reason to congratulate itself. But well-ordered and flourishing States have existed apart altogether from revealed religion. For the State to regard itself as an instrument of *salvation*, and to use its power for the promotion of that end, is to mistake its function. The proper object of the State is the protection of life and property, the temporal peace and prosperity of the empire; and though it may lawfully entertain secondary aims, it must never forget that they are but secondary. In *themselves* they may be infinitely more important than the primary aim, but to the State, *as such*, they must be secondary. The State, *e.g.*, may laudably foster science, literature, and art; it may furnish means for geographical discoveries; it may second the efforts of private philanthropy; in the matter of national education some have supposed it may even go further: but should it discover that it cannot pursue these objects without exciting national discontent, and the setting of class against class, and so impeding the material progress of the nation, it must forego them, for the present at least. Its business, in such a case, will be to endeavour to enlighten the mind of the nation; to

believes in a God, who will reward or punish in this world. "No rational and stable legislation in Church matters can be adopted till we recognize the principle that the State, as a State, is no judge of creeds. Civil government exists solely for the protection of men's temporal interests. It ought not to carry its regards beyond the grave. It views religions solely in their temporal character; with their truth or falsehood, their greater or less tendency to promote men's happiness in a future state, it has no concern. It is the Lord not of the dead but of the living. 'If,' says M. de Tocqueville in his very able work on the United States, 'it is of great importance to man, as an individual, that his religion should be true, such is not the case with the community. The community has nothing to hope or fear from another life; and what is important is not so much that all its members should profess the *true* religion, as that they should profess *some* religion.'"—Sir G. Cornwall Lewis.

1 Idea of Church and State, p. 59.

^ by attempt public discussion through the press and in the senate, the removal of misconceptions and prejudices; and at a more auspicious moment, when public opinion shall have veered round, to resume the project. This is nothing more than saying that no human institution, and we may add no divine, can accomplish *all* good ends. Take the case of a hospital; it is *in itself* infinitely more important that the inmates should hear the gospel and become real Christians than that they should be cured of their bodily ailments; yet in certain cases the exhortations of the chaplain might, in a medical point of view, be inexpedient; and should such a case arise, the physician would only be doing his duty in enjoining silence; and the governors could hardly be acquitted of folly if, notwithstanding, they should insist upon the sick man's receiving religious instruction. The reason is, because the *primary* object of a hospital is to cure the sick; while, though an important, it is but a *secondary* object to impart religious instruction. No institution is either fitted or possesses the power, to attempt everything, however beneficial it may seem. The Church deals with saving truth and the unwritten moralities of religion, but she has no power, and ought to have no power, to enforce her precepts by secular coercion. The State possesses the weapon of coercion, and necessarily so *for its own purposes*; but its sphere is not primarily religion, neither may it use its weapons in the cause of religion. There is nothing religious people have more reason to be on their guard against, than the notion that what is confessedly *in itself* the most important of all things may lawfully be pursued by any and every means, no matter whether justice, humanity, and the inalienable rights of conscience, protest against the means used. This was the principle of the Inquisition.

But morality is the elder sister even of religion, and justice comes before conscientiousness. Providence has placed limits to our efforts to do good, and within those limits we must remain. What we can do within the limits it is our duty to attempt, but not a step further. It will by no means, *e.g.*, be a matter of *indifference* to the civil magistrate whether or not Christianity, and of forms of Christianity, whether Protestantism or Romanism be the national faith. Who that considers the influence of Protestantism upon national character—the influence of an open Bible and freedom from sacerdotal thralldom—but must devoutly pray that Ireland, and not only Ireland but Spain, and Belgium, and Austria may become Protestant. An enlightened Protestant government, therefore, or rather we should say nation, will take care to *offer* Protestantism to the Irish people, just as British Christians *are offering* Christianity to India; but as in the latter case we dare not use British power to propagate Christianity by force, not only because we should think it wrong, but because we should thereby throw the country into civil convulsions; so in the former it is not permitted to the State to *impose* Protestantism upon a reluctant people, especially if the civil interests of the empire seem to suffer thereby. And even if they did not suffer by the attempt, the employment of the temporal power, whether it be in the shape of positive penalty or civil disability, to produce religious conviction is a blunder as well as a crime. The magistrate certainly cannot be indifferent to *all* forms of religion, for some may inculcate tenets, or practices, subversive of public morality, or inconsistent with the national sovereignty; and no Christian State, certainly no independent State, can ally itself with such. Ultramontane Romanism, *e.g.*, must, according to its *theoretical* principles, be held

absolutely incompatible with national welfare, striking, as it does, at the root of national independence. Happily Ultramontanists do not always act consistently with their principles. We are here, however, assuming the existence of a *national* Church; and even in a Roman Catholic country ultramontanism is subversive of such an institution.

Thus, according to the theory we have attempted to expound, when the Christianity of a nation succeeds in coming to an understanding with itself, and throws itself out into a corresponding form, then, but not before, a connection with the State becomes possible, and in our opinion most desirable. It is not that the State chooses a church and makes it national, but that the nation, in its secular capacity, recognizes the nation in its religious capacity; and while it tolerates (as it ought to do) dissident bodies, it is not bound to shut its eyes to the fact that they do not represent itself. It is not a question of *truth*; the State, as such, we hold to be quite incompetent to decide between truth and error in religion; it has neither the authority nor the means to do so: what earthly power has? It is a question of fact; the national Church is there, the State needs religion to hallow its acts, a tacit, unforced alliance takes place. If this is called "ascendancy," it is but the ascendancy of the nation over itself. And now, what will probably be the terms of alliance, and how far will they operate auspiciously or the reverse as regards the interests of religion? A very brief notice of these points must suffice.

First then, it is probable that, in place of voluntary contributions in support of religion, the State will allot a legal maintenance to the national clergy. What the form it may take is immaterial. And this, in our opinion, is a desirable arrangement,

not merely on account of the injurious influences of pure voluntaryism, but because it enables the State to place an authorised teacher in localities in which, from poverty or indifference, voluntary efforts would altogether fail. Only it must be borne in mind that the nation has not alienated this provision in perpetuity to the use of any one body. It has a right, therefore, should it change its religion, to take away the public temporalities from the body which has hitherto enjoyed them, and transfer them to the new, or the reformed national Church (as the case may be), vested interests of course being respected. The case of private endowments is more complicated, and need not be here discussed.

Secondly, the alliance must be based on the absolute supremacy of the civil power (in our case the Crown) over all persons and causes, ecclesiastical as well as civil, within the realm: a most necessary safeguard against hierarchical despotism, or cleric interference, whether from abroad or at home, with the rights of the subject. It is but reasonable that in a national Church, recognised by the State, no regulations or changes should be binding without the consent of the nation, expressed through its constitutional organs. It is in this sense that the Queen is the head of our Church. The more the clergy are under secular control, the better for the laity. This, in an established Church, is effected not only by the general sovereignty of the nation over its own affairs, but by the indirect action of public opinion. Whatever, *e.g.*, may, in some points of view, be thought of the temporal peerage of our bishops, there can be no doubt that the liability to be called to account before the august assembly to which they belong, operates as a check against the arbitrary exercise of power. The rector, in like manner, is much more under the control of public

opinion than the pastor of the Zion or Ebenezer chapel, who owes no allegiance save to his own deacons.

Thirdly, the State aids the Church by placing ecclesiastical law on the same footing with the civil, and furnishing the only tribunals which can satisfactorily adjudicate in cases involving temporal interests: such as, whether the fundamental conditions of clerical communion have been observed, or whether the endowments of the body, if it possess any, are properly applied. We are sometimes tempted to find fault with these tribunals, viz., when their decisions do not fall in with our preconceived opinions; but what would be our fate were our judges divines? Let the clergy pause before they agitate for the substitution of Convocation, or any clerical tribunal, for the judicial committee of the Privy Council. O fortunati sua si bona norint!

Lastly, should the Church, in the lapse of ages, contract impurity in doctrine, or ritual, or practical system, and becoming sensible of her departure from the Apostolic standard, desire reformation; or should she arrive at the conclusion that changes or additions are desirable in her formularies, suitable to altered times; her connection with the State gives her the means of accomplishing these objects with greater facility, and less risk of exciting party animosity, than if she stood alone. For all parties ought to defer to the voice of the nation, unequivocally expressed.

If we do no more than glance at the advantages flowing from the social position of our clergy, which depends very much upon the temporal honours with which it has pleased the State to invest their order, it is because the topic may seem invidious in reference to the ministers of other denominations. But none can doubt that it would be an evil day for

the country if its accredited spiritual teachers should sink below the upper classes, either in intelligence or refinement.

On the other hand, the connection assumes an inauspicious aspect, when the State, mistaking its function, suffers itself to be persuaded by the Church (*i.e.*, most commonly the clergy) to attempt the propagation of what it deems religious truth by the employment of secular coercion, whatever form that coercion may assume. For be it remembered that whether a man is sent to the stake, or is merely deprived of political rights, because he does not profess the religion of the State, though the *amount* of suffering is very different in either case, the *principle* is the same. And it must be of detriment to the State, and therefore improper for it *as a State*, to deprive itself of the services of men of eminent abilities because they hold certain religious views; as improper as it would be for the Church of England governor of an hospital to decline the services of an eminent surgeon because he happens to be a Unitarian. It was in an evil day that our Church had recourse to penal laws, or Test Acts, to strengthen her position: we are convinced of the error, but not until much irreparable mischief has been done.

Or again, when the State unduly thwarts the legitimate development of Church-life, as in the matter of synodical action, or the exercise of discipline; *i.e.*, when it aims at making the clergy *merely* State functionaries, a kind of spiritual police. This subject is too complex to be more than touched upon.

The conclusion we arrive at, as regards the first part of the question, is that the connection of Church and State (when the Church is truly national) is beneficial to both; and that our own Church in

particular, though the relation may not be in all points such as we should wish, is more aided in her mission than hindered by it.

In applying the general principles we have ventured to enunciate, to the case of the Irish Established Church, we would not be thought unmindful of the practical difficulties which beset the subject. Nevertheless, from our point of view, the question admits of but one reply. Briefly:—There never has been, and there does not exist now, an Irish national Church to which the State can ally itself, because there never has existed a united Irish nation. The English colony, (for such it may still be called) though possessing by far the greater part of the landed property of the country, cannot be termed so; much less can the Presbyterians of Ulster; and the remaining Celtic population, though numerically the largest, from its inferior wealth, intelligence, and energy, hardly deserves the name. The fate of the island has indeed been singularly unhappy. Not because it has been invaded by a foreign power, or colonized by strangers, for that has happened to England; but because no perfect fusion of the several races has hitherto taken place. No population in Europe is composed of a greater mixture of races than that of England: Celt, Saxon, Dane, Norman, all contribute their share to the formation of the national character: but through wise legislation, aided by propitious circumstances, visible distinctions of this kind have merged in the one national type of Englishman. Not so in Ireland. Though to a certain extent, through intermarriage and other causes, a fusion has begun and is going on, it is far from complete; and to this day the Celtic population is distinguishable in habits, in physiognomy, in character, no less than

in language and religion, from the English and Scotch settlers, whose course is traceable like that of those rivers which are said to pass through the sea without commingling with it. If this is the case now, what must it have been in those ages when legislation was expressly directed to foster the distinctions of race, and to exclude all beyond the "English pale" from the rights of citizens? We enter not into the question how far these restrictive measures, and the penal laws of a later age, may have been, at the time, politically necessary or excusable. What we have to do with is the fact that they produced a profound hostility between the aborigines of the island and that part of the population which represented English domination, a feeling by no means as yet extinct. What a period, and what a state of things, in which to entertain the notion of erecting a religious establishment in connection with the State! There was here no national basis—no national Church already existing with which the State could enter into relations; no united national religious sentiment which it could shape and embody. The attempt was made to create by Acts of Parliament a thing which is of little value if it is not of natural and native growth,—with the results which we see.

We must not judge Elizabeth and her successors too harshly in their Irish policy. The intractable temper of the natives presented great difficulties to the English government. Romanism at home and on the Continent threatened the succession, and with it the civil liberties of the kingdom; the functions of the State in religious matters were imperfectly understood. The mistake, however, was not the less. What was the course that ought to have been pursued? With the light of experience to guide us, we may venture to reply, that the

question of religious establishments should have been left in abeyance until such time as judicious legislation should have fused the hostile elements into something like a homogeneous whole. It would have been proper for the English Government to sanction *voluntary* efforts to lead the Irish Celtic race to a purer faith; to take care that the Scriptures and the Liturgy should be translated into the native tongue; to interpose the strong arm of the law against insult or injury to the agents employed in the work of teaching and preaching: but to divide the country into parishes, to appropriate the tithes, and to plant the machinery of the Anglican Church in its integrity, amidst a population bitterly opposed to the measure, was, we venture to think, a fatal blunder. We must suppose that the authors of this fictitious national Church believed either that the native race would emigrate or become extinct, or that it would be, in due time, converted to Protestantism. But what an engine of conversion was the Established Church likely to prove—with its history and associations!

Yet, as long as Ireland was supposed, politically, to consist of the Protestant part of the population; as long as the Celtic portion, however forming the bulk of the nation, was regarded in the light of aliens and Helots; there was some show of consistency in the theory. Thus regarded, Ireland was a mere province of England, like Yorkshire; a part of England separated by a narrow strait of the sea; and it might be thought not unreasonable that the English Establishment should prevail in what was virtually a part of England. But the recent course of legislation has greatly added to our embarrass-12. ments. Just and inevitable as it was, its direct effect has been to elevate the Celtic population to the consciousness of national life, and with that

feeling to the consciousness of power; and placing ourselves in their position we surely cannot blame them for demanding perfect religious as well as political equality. It is what we should do ourselves, under the same circumstances. To reverse the spirit of our legislation towards Ireland is impossible; there seems no alternative but to advance until we have done all we can to make her a united nation, that is, until the last shred, or symbol, of ascendancy of race over race is, *as far as the State is concerned*, done away. It is impossible to suppose that the sagacious statesmen who passed the decisive *Act of Catholic Emancipation* should not have foreseen that, sooner or later, the question of the maintenance of the Irish Church must arise.

This question does not seem possible of solution on the basis of antiquarian research, or improvement in details. Of what avail is it to exhibit to our own satisfaction the lineal descent of the present Irish Protestant bishops from St. Patrick, or to prove (what may be quite true) that the revenues of the Church, properly distributed, are not too great for her needs? Or of what avail to retrace the melancholy history of the past, and to exonerate the Church at the expense of the State for the failure of the Reformation in Ireland? There can be no doubt that the issue of things might have been very different had the policy of England towards Ireland been other than it was, and had all Irish bishops been like Bedell. There were *molliæ tempora*, favourable conjunctures, when, had judicious measures been pursued, the Reformation would have had as fair a chance of being accepted in Ireland as it had in England and Scotland. But the opportunities were neglected, and are not likely to recur, at least not for a long time. What the statesman has *now* to do with is the fact that the Irish Church, whatever its

merits, is looked upon by the bulk of the Irish nation (so far as it can be called a nation) as a gross injustice, and a standing memorial of conquest. It may not be its fault, but its misfortune, that it should occupy this anomalous position; but the fact remains. After several hundred years we discover that no real progress has been made by the State Church of Ireland towards becoming the national Church. Those who reflect upon the tendencies of human nature will not wonder at the result. The Irish Church presents itself to the Celtic population, *with a history and traditions* which it will take ages to efface from their memory. This is its sad misfortune; no greater to a Christian Church. The parallel attempt to introduce episcopacy into Scotland at the close of the 17th century might have read a lesson to our statesmen, had they been wise enough to understand and act upon it towards all parts of the empire. Happily Scotland was strong enough to assert her religious freedom, and Great Britain "is now one because the Churches are two." Our experiment in Ireland may be brought to a speedy and decisive test; if the island were independent, would it acquiesce in the present state of ecclesiastical affairs? If not, the Established Church there may be a "protest," or a "garrison," but it is not the national Church.

It must be admitted that to disestablish an institution of such ancient date, and so interwoven with the frame-work of society, is a step the gravity of which cannot be exaggerated. *Turpius ejicitur quam non admittitur hospes.* But the question having been formally raised must be settled, and in our opinion can only be satisfactorily settled in one way. Let it be remembered that the mere endowment of the Roman Catholic Church, which seems to have been entertained at various times, would not

place the Churches on an equality; for a church may be endowed without being established. Perfect equality can only be attained by establishing all the Churches in Ireland, or by establishing none; and as the former is impossible, the latter is all that remains to us. But serious doubts are entertained as to the probable effect of the change upon Protestantism as a religious system, and eventually upon the stability of the Church of England.

With respect to the former question, we entertain a strong conviction that the interests of Protestantism will not substantially suffer. It is a poor compliment to our faith to suppose that it cannot stand unless propped up by the secular power. But what are the facts? The Protestant Church (*i.e.*, the laity and clergy) stands possessed of about seven-tenths of the land of the country; it is the Church of the gentry and aristocracy; it possesses a splendidly endowed College; it will always be sure of the cordial sympathy of England and Scotland; it will retain (as is affirmed) the larger part of its endowments. There must be something, one would think, "rotten in the state of Denmark," if with these advantages it is not able to hold its own, and even make progress. Perhaps the necessity of voluntary effort may impart new life in quarters where such an impulse is needed. From the history of the Free Kirk in Scotland we learn what may be done by a religious body really in earnest. One thing is certain, that whatever efforts may be made either to preserve or to extend the boundaries of Protestantism will tell with infinitely greater effect when the State is not seen in the background throwing its ægis over them. If we are to give credit to the testimony of impartial observers, the most successful efforts in modern times to propagate the Reformed faith in Ireland have proceeded from

voluntary societies, supported by private contributions: these may still prosecute their work, under the protection of the law, but free from the traditional associations which the native Irish mind connects with Protestantism. The fear that if the State withdraws its recognition from the Establishment Romanism will sweep over the land like a flood appears chimerical. Romanism cannot be *practically* more dominant than it is at present; but it may become more tolerant and more easy of access when the feeling of political or ecclesiastical proscription is quite removed. We speak not so much of the clergy as of the laity of the Roman Catholic Church; and it must be remembered that even in that Church the laity are a part of it as well as the clergy. There must be in Ireland a considerable, and we trust a growing body, of prosperous and intelligent Roman Catholic laymen, who do not sympathise with the Ultramontane manifestos of their prelates. It is on this body that the future hopes of Ireland mainly rest. But should Ultramontanism—that deadly foe of national freedom and progress—really attempt to encroach upon our liberties, will the strength of the empire be less available than it is now to crush the serpent? And shall we not go forth to the contest with ten-fold vigour from the consciousness that neither politically nor religiously has the Roman Catholic population of the island ground for complaint? Thrice is he armed whose quarrel is just.

Then with respect to the Church of England,—it is not easy to perceive how the disestablishment of the Irish Church can affect it. Not surely because the style runs,—“The United Church of England and Ireland.” The measure may operate against the principle of establishments in general, but not more against the Established Church of

England than against that of Scotland. The fact is, each Church must stand on its own merits. The English Church at present represents, on the whole, the religious convictions of the English people, and as long as it does so it is safe: if it ceases to do so it is very likely that it will be disestablished and disendowed. It has received no charter of perpetual existence any more than its sisters. Some may think that it will stand in a better position when no longer connected with the anomaly of the Irish Church. The cases of English dissent, and of Wales, which have been much insisted on, do not seem to present an analogy to that of the Irish Church. The secession from the national Church in the former cases has been voluntary, and has left no feeling of national degradation behind. Nor do such irreconcilable differences exist between the tenets of the Church and those of the dissident bodies as to forbid the hopes of reunion. But, above all, magnitude is an inseparable element from a right estimate of the case. The line, it is true, cannot be drawn strictly, but the argument appeals to common sense. No one body of English dissenters makes approach in point of numbers to the English Church. Just, therefore, as in the late American war, that which in its principle might have been considered only the rebellion of a province assumed from its magnitude the dignity of a civil war, and the seceding states had, on that ground, accorded to them by our Government the rights of belligerents, and properly so; so we cannot at present deem any one body of dissenters of sufficient importance to entitle them to disturb existing arrangements, whatever consideration may be given to its claims, should it succeed in comprising within its pale the whole, or the majority, or even a great part, of the nation. In Ireland the dissident

body is the bulk of the nation; we have to deal with four or five millions of Roman Catholics against six hundred thousand Protestants of the Church.

There is no more arduous, no nobler task than that which the restitution of Ireland to its proper place in the United Kingdom presents to the British statesman. The problem is to convert what has been a source of weakness into a vast accession of strength, to attach a race replete with noble instincts, though with many faults, to British connection, from the felt reciprocation of benefits and the possession of equal privileges. The solution is not to be despaired of. If Irish Romanism appears to have become Ultramontane, let us remember that we have ourselves contributed to make it what it is. Treat persons as incurably disloyal, and they are sure to become so. That Romanism is not inconsistent with loyalty and patriotism has been proved over and over again in the history of England. When Ireland, under the operation of equal laws and the removal of badges of ascendancy, shall have become socially prosperous, and politically united; and from both causes attached, as Scotland is, to British connection; then it will be time for the legislature to entertain the question of a Church establishment for her. Who can predict what her religious faith may be in future years? Under the influence of education, commercial prosperity, and the circulation of the Scriptures in her native tongue, who can tell but that she may eventually give in her adherence to the doctrines of the Reformation? As Protestants we hold that the Bible does not guarantee immortality to the Papacy; and history reads us the same lesson. Nations change their faith, like individuals; and why may not Ireland follow the example of her sisters? Should that auspicious event occur, and the Irish nation give birth to a truly national Church,

capable of alliance with a free Protestant State, the problem will be solved, and the empire will be one because the Churches are three. Perhaps this is but a fond dream: if so, we must be content with making Ireland a nation, but leaving her without an Established, perhaps without a national, Church. Christianity, however, may yet survive, and even flourish. And Christianity is more important than the fate of any Established Church. Whatever may become of local Churches, or mighty empires, the one true Church, the body and bride of Christ, stands upon a rock, against which the surges of impiety may dash themselves, but will dash themselves in vain.







